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21 August 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Graham

SUBJECT: The Forum

REFERENCES:

- a. OCI Internal Memorandum, "Decision to Publish Soviet Developments and Soviet Weekly Review," 4 May 1972
- b. DD/OCI Memorandum to Andrew Marshall re Forum, 13 August 1973

1. You asked for a wrap-up on the rise and fall of the Soviet Weekly Review Forum. The two references tell most of the story. I have learned a few other details from Dick Lehman, D/OCI, and 25X1A9A [REDACTED] of INR/RES/SOV. Apparently the only person at DIA familiar with the Forum was Colonel Frederick Sanders, now retired.

2. The Forum had a short life span. It was initiated in April 1972 at the request of (primarily) Andy Marshall and 25X1A9A [REDACTED] of the NSC Staff. The purpose was to provide relatively long and complex articles on Soviet (and East European) topics and to expose meaningful differences of view. In theory CIA or INR or DIA could submit an article, to which either or both of the other agencies could reply. The debate could go on as long as anyone wished. That was the theory. But after two months 25X1A9A [REDACTED] now Deputy Director of OCI, consulted with 25X1A [REDACTED] about the declining quantity and (in his view) quality of the Forum articles. 25X1A [REDACTED] With Hyland's approval CIA ceased to publish the Forum after 30 May 1972. Later the Soviet Weekly Review itself was abolished.

3. Meanwhile, INR, which opposed the abolition of the Forum, was invited to contribute and coordinate articles for the CIA daily publication Soviet Developments. INR claimed it did not have sufficient manpower to do this. DIA, however, was not issued such an

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invitation. DIA had not been receiving Soviet Developments because that publication drew on certain especially sensitive clandestine documents not normally disseminated to DIA.

4. There are several possible reasons why the experiment failed:

-- The responsibility was added to the analysts' normal workload, and that normal load became heavier as the Moscow Summit approached (Source: reference b).

-- The process of elaborating meaningful dissent proved to be more difficult than expected (Source: reference b).

-- At least one of the principal consumers had indicated he preferred material which was not coordinated (Source: reference a).

-- Because of the classification problem, the Forum was deprived of some of the most interesting material for discussion whereas the daily Soviet Developments was not (Source: my speculation).

-- The Forum may have proved embarrassing to CIA since CIA views were being criticized in CIA publications, and in consequence CIA may not have given the Forum a fair chance (Source: INR comment).

5. INR would like to see the Forum revived, if Marshall or some other consumer pushed for it. INR thinks it could be done on a weekly basis essentially as before. There would be lean issues from time to time, but, in INR's view, that would be all right.

6. OCI's view is that perhaps the best way to bring to light significant issues would be to ask the consumer (periodically) to designate topics on which various interpretations would be important to him. Meanwhile OCI feels that the annexes in the Soviet Developments provide in-depth treatment of complex subjects as needed.

7. In my view, a monthly Soviet-East European affairs Forum, with many articles generated by consumer request, might meet the

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25X1A recommendations of INR and OCI, satisfy Marshall and at least not offend [REDACTED]. The difficulty with such a plan is that it would add one more finished intelligence product. That does not seem to be a desirable outcome. It might be better to substitute the Soviet-East European monthly for one or more agency publications. It is questionable whether OCI or INR would favor that solution.

25X1A9a

8. I told Lehman and [REDACTED] I would request that copies of this memorandum be sent to them; that is subject to your approval.

[REDACTED]

25X1A9a

Product Review Group

Attachments:

Ref. a & b

Distribution:

Orig - Addressee, PRG Subject

1 - [REDACTED] 25X1A9a

1 - PRG Chrono

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